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TAGS: PLOS, JA
SUBJ: FIRST REACTION TO SECRETARY'S LOS SPEECH
REF: STATE 085109

1. FONOFF LOS OFFICE PHONED TO REQUEST BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON SECRETARY'S SPEECH JUST AFTER EMBASSY RECEIVED REFTEL AND BEFORE WE HAD RECEIVED TEXT. WITH LITTLE TIME REMAINING BEFORE WEEKEND BREAK, EMBASSY DECIDED TO DISCUSS SPEECH INFORMALLY ALONG LINES REFTEL WITH LOS OFFICE IMMEDIATELY AND TO FOLLOW UP AT HIGHER LEVEL ON APRIL 12.
2. ACCORDINGLY, EMBOFF REVIEWED SPEECH (AS TRANSMITTED) TO FONOFF BY J/UN) WITH DEPDIR KOIKE OF LOS OFFICE. SINCE JAPANESE LARGELY PRIVY TO OUR THINKING THROUGH MEDIUM OF G/5 TALKS, SUBSTANCE INCLUDED NO SURPRISES. KOIKE VENTURED BELIEF THAT SPEECH WILL HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON LOS CONFERENCE DELIBERATIONS, ESPECIALLY WITH REGRD TO THE SEABEDS DEADLOCK. THE US, HE SAID, IS SIGNALLING AT THE SAME TIME REASONABLE FLEXIBILITY AND THAT THERE ARE CLEAR LIMITS TO THAT FLEXIBILITY. HE THOUGHT SPEECH WOULD SWAY A NUMBER OF LDC'S.
3. THE LOS OFFICE IS PUZZLING OVER US TIMING IN MAKING SPEECH, THAT CURRENT SESSION AT HALF-WAY POINT DOESN'T SEEM SUFFICIENT EXPLANATION, SO KOIKE WONDERED IF SPEECH WASN'T INTENDED TO SOFTEN IMPACT OF PRESUMABLY IMMINENT PRESIDENTIAL SIGNATURE ON 200-MILE EXCLUSIVE FISHING LEGISLATION.
4. KOIKE OBSERVED THAT SECRETARY'S DECISION TO HEAD US DEL TO 4TH PLENARY NOT ONLY INDICATES IMPORTANCE US ATTACHES TO SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME THIS YEAR BUT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT WE ON BALANCE HOPEFUL -- A SENTIMENT THAT GOJ SHARES. QUESTIONED, HE SAID THAT GOJ IN RESPONSE WOULD PROBABLY ESCALATE LEADERSHIP OF ITS DELEGATION. HODGSON

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